

June 2008

Welcome to Collaborating Centre Connection!

In this issue: [Sign Up to Receive the Collaborating Centre Connection](#)

[Spotlight: Evelyn Kortum, Co-coordinator of Network of Collaborating Centres in Occupational Health](#)
[WHO Collaborating Centre Showcase: Occupational Safety and Health Division, Ministry of Manpower, Singapore](#)

[Workshop on Occupational Health, Hygiene, and Safety in India](#)

[Call for Abstracts for Congress of the International Commission on Occupational Health](#)

[Case Study - The Americas Silicosis Initiative](#)

[Compendium is Updated](#)

[Read past issues of Collaborating Centre Connection](#)

[Sign Up to Receive the Collaborating Centre Connection](#)

Spotlight: Evelyn Kortum, Co-coordinator of Network of Collaborating Centres in Occupational Health

Evelyn Kortum was born in Hamburg, Germany. During an apprenticeship in an industrial enterprise, she realized the importance of awareness-raising, training, and education of workers to protect their physical health. Following her love of languages, Evelyn spent a year in London and then moved to live in France, planning to stay for one year to improve her French, and is still there to this day. Evelyn earned a BSc in Psychology with the Open University and a MSc in Occupational Psychology with the University of London, Birkbeck College. She worked full-time at WHO, ILO, and had her son. She focused on issues of work-related stress and harassment and was active within WHO's Grievance Panel, which deals with cases of harassment. Lately, Evelyn's focus has shifted to challenge of nurturing healthy workplaces in low-income countries. Evelyn says, "WHO is all about prevention, and this is one area where we can make a difference by raising awareness and proposing adequate interventions."

Since 2000, Evelyn has been managing WHO's Global Network of Collaborating Centres in Occupational Health, largely on the administrative and managerial side, and lately as the Co-coordinator of the Network. Evelyn has promoted the Global Network within and outside of WHO. The Network has a number of other champions in WHO, including Matias Tuler, the responsible officer for administering WHO Collaborating Centres at large. The Network received a very positive evaluation by the Internal Oversight Services in 2007 and has become a model for other programmes within WHO given its well-designed structure and alignment to the main objective of occupational health.

The Network assembles motivated people who want to improve the health of workers worldwide. Evelyn understands that it is much more challenging to collaborate than to work independently, but believes that this is the only viable long-term solution for effective action to benefit workers worldwide. Because the Network and its activities are constantly evaluated, adjusted, and improved, Evelyn believes the Network



Evelyn Kortum

has a great future. Evelyn and Marilyn Fingerhut are organizing both the Planning Committee meeting and the Global CC meeting in March 2009 in Cape Town. Evelyn and Marilyn will be persistent and disciplined with respect to stimulating the sharing of knowledge and experiences, keeping the compass needle on the aims that lead to improvements in workers' health, and providing a network environment which will accommodate a vibrant, interesting, and multi-cultural group of researchers and practitioners.

Since Evelyn believes in work-life balance as an occupational psychologist and a family person, an American Indian saying from the tribe of Ute seems appropriate, "If I am in harmony with my family, that's success".

WHO Collaborating Centre Showcase: Occupational Safety and Health Division, Ministry of Manpower, Singapore

By Stavroula Leka, AA3 Manager and Aditya Jain, AA3 Deputy Manager



Activity Area 3 aims to improve working conditions through the development and implementation of simplified risk reduction tools and methods. It seeks to disseminate and evaluate these methods widely, especially in contexts where expertise is missing, such as small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and developing countries. Activities include the development of toolkits and sectoral toolboxes through multi-centre and global projects. AA3 includes 46 multi-centre projects in 10 subgroups - targeted at regional and global users. A collaborating centre of the WHO, the Occupational Safety and Health Division (OSHD) at the Ministry of Manpower in Singapore, is leading multi-centre projects which aim at developing risk reduction toolkits.

The OSHD promotes occupational safety and health (OSH) at the national level. The division adopts a proactive and systemic approach to accident prevention and involves all stakeholders in risk management. It works closely with industry to facilitate risk management as well as to develop a stronger OSH culture. Its key mission is to eliminate death, injury, and ill-health from all workplaces. One of its strategic outcomes includes ensuring that OSH forms an integral part of business with risk management becoming the norm. The division's main goal is to attain standards of the current top ten developed countries with good safety records. Under the guidance of Dr. Sweet Far Ho, the OSHD is leading four projects in AA3.

AA3:4 - CH4: OSHD is working with the International Occupational Hygiene Association (IOHA) and the Health and Safety Executive, UK to investigate the issues involved in applying the International Chemical Control Toolkit that uses the control banding approach and evaluate its usefulness in SMEs in Singapore.



AA3:4-CH5: OSHD is working with IOHA, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, and the Institute for Infocomm Research, Singapore to develop a web-based tool that will help chemical manufacturers, suppliers, and users including SMEs to check the conformance of material safety data sheets to the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals standard.

AA3:20 - P4: OSHD has developed a user-friendly tool that provides companies with a basis for intervention, management, and monitoring of employees' psychosocial health. The web-based application is ready for use by companies, including SMEs, to address employees' psychosocial health issues.

Occupational Safety and Health Division at the

[File.datiWorkHealth3octfinal.pdf](#)

AA3:46 - Ec1: OSHD is working on the Development of a Workplace Intervention Net-Cost (WIN) Calculator. The objective is to develop a web-based tool to assist companies in estimating net-costs for health hazard control by applying the Net-Cost Model.

Further details about the work of the Occupational Safety and Health Division can be obtained from the project leader: Sweet-Far-Ho@mom.gov.sg. For more information about Activity Area 3, please contact: Stavroula.Leka@nottingham.ac.uk

Workshop on Occupational Health, Hygiene, and Safety in India

By Leslie Nickels, AA4 Manager

Occupational health issues have been gaining ground in the rapidly growing Indian industry. Nayati International, a US based non-profit organization which is presently active in India, organized a five-day comprehensive workshop at the Indian Institute of Chemical Technology in Hyderabad from 11-15 February 2008. The workshop, "Fundamentals of Occupational Health, Hygiene and Safety", aimed to increase practical skills in risk assessment and management. Nayati partnered with WHO Collaborating Centres, faculty at the Great Lakes Centers of the University of Illinois School of Public Health USA, the Center at Sri Ramachandra Medical College in Chennai, India, the National Institute of Occupational Health in South Africa, and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in the US.



Workshop on Occupational Health, Hygiene, and Safety in India

The workshop, based on WHO's training module, was attended by sixty professionals and university students of varied backgrounds and industry sectors. The most highly rated aspects of the workshop were a day-long comprehensive risk assessment of several of the institute's laboratories and the case-based interactive sessions. Suggestions from participants who are looking forward to more courses included having advanced courses that deal with hazardous situations combined with interactive activities. The valuable feedback from participants at this workshop is helping partners to design the format and content for future capacity-building activities.

Call for Abstracts for Congress of the International Commission on Occupational Health

The 29th triennial Congress of the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH2009) will be held in Cape Town, South Africa from 22-27 March 2009. The Scientific Program has been posted on the website, www.icoh2009.co.za, and the "Call for Abstracts" has been issued, with an end



29th
ICOH International Congress
on Occupational Health
22 - 27 March 2009
Cape Town - South Africa

date of 21 July 2008 for receipt of abstracts. Grants are available for some presenters from developing nations. A student prize will be awarded. Please quickly send in your abstract and alert your colleagues.

Case Study - The Americas Silicosis Initiative

A project report of the Americas Silicosis Initiative now exists on the WHO website. Please visit the below link to read about this successful project. Project leaders and Collaborating Centres are encouraged to submit similar case studies and project reports, which display your hard work. Send your story to JHingston@cdc.gov. <http://www.who.int/collaboratingcentres/casestudies/en/index8.html>

Compendium is Updated

The Compendium of activities of the WHO Collaborating Centres in Occupational Health 2006-2010 now contains progress updates on the projects. To view the Compendium and "Progress on Project" sections, go to: http://www.who.int/occupational_health/network/2006compendium/en/index.html

Read past issues of *Collaborating Centre Connection*

Please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/ccc/> to read previous issues of *Collaborating Centre Connection*.

Sign Up to Receive the *Collaborating Centre Connection*

Everyone is welcome to sign up to receive the *Collaborating Centre Connection* in your email inbox. To sign up, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/CCC/signup.html>, click on "Subscribe to *Collaborating Centre Connection*," enter your email address, and then click "Go" and "Finish."